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# NEWS
## FROM YOUR MUSEUM
THE ROYAL ONTARIO MUSEUM

*Know your Museum better*

No. 35 TORONTO January, 1944

## WILDLIFE CROP ESSENTIAL TO CANADA

"Wildlife is not an incidental by-product of our country", said Prof. J. R. Dymond of the Royal Ontario Museum. "It is the basis for major industries. Our fur-trade, our commercial fisheries, and to a great extent, our tourist traffic, depend on how well we manage wildlife."

"Beaver fur was the principal lure which led to the opening up of our country", continued Prof. Dymond, pointing out an exhibit in the Museum on the subject. "Although the supply of beaver has greatly diminished, recent experiments by the Hudson's Bay Company and by provincial governments show that it can be greatly increased. Plans for perpetuating and increasing other fur-bearers are urgently needed," said Prof. Dymond. "Some are too near the vanishing point."

"If our after-war plans do not include intelligent management of wildlife we shall reap only a fraction of the return in fur, fish and game that many areas are capable of producing," concluded Prof. Dymond. "Two-thirds of the area of Canada can produce no other permanent crop than wildlife and nearly all of it can contribute some."

### DANGER DOWN UNDER

Reputed to be powerful enough to hold a diver if he should accidentally put his foot between the valves, the giant clam (Tridacna gigas) measures only two or three feet long, but attains a maximum weight of six to seven hundred pounds. Examples of this monstrous clam which lives "down under" in Pacific coral reefs are on exhibit in the Royal Ontario Museum.

### THE OLD VIOLIN WAITS

In a gallery corner of the Royal Ontario Museum, there is an old violin on display. It was made long, long ago. Into it went all the care and craft that skilled and patient hands could give. Under the touch of the master musician, it once was capable of bringing forth some of the sweetest sounds known to man. Its music may have stirred creative impulses in the listener or lulled his deep despair. The violin is now much worn and its maker and player are dust, but the mute symbol is preserved for all to see. To one man it may recall some part of the storied past, to another beholder it may serve as an inspiration to make fine instruments or to play them. Out of the dead may yet issue the spark for the human tinder.

### STRANGE BUT FAMILIAR

A class of school children visited the Royal Ontario Museum recently and later made drawings of the animals they had seen in one large gallery. The zebra was the most popular subject. Doubtless they were impressed by the strange pattern on a familiar form. The zebra is a striped horse.

### MUSEUM HOURS

**Open Week Days except Monday 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m.**
**Sundays 2.00 to 5.00 p.m.**

## KING COAL

We wanted to discuss a burning matter with the geologist of the Royal Ontario Museum the other day and as we passed down the orderly gallery to his office, the nice, big, shiny, black specimens of coal in the clean cases appeared very attractive. We got our information all right, and here it is:

With the destruction of the forests, Canadians have become more dependent on coal, now the main fuel for both domestic and industrial heating. Wood, because of its water content, has about one-half the heat value of high-grade coal. A cord of maple weighs about two tons and has less than half the heat value of one ton of coal. Bulk, and freight charges, make wood an expensive fuel except near its source. Petroleum possesses from one and one-half to two times the heat value of the same weight of coal and some of the distillates sold as **fuel oil** have even higher heat value. Natural gas has much higher heat value than coal gas and where available is one of the cleanest and best fuels known. Electricity has proved too expensive for general heating. Peat has long been used in Ireland and some other countries and, dried and compressed, it makes a bright fire with plenty of air such as in open grates, but otherwise, it is very smoky. It burns away too rapidly for use in a cold climate. There is plenty of peat in Canada but when taken from the bog it contains 80 to 90 percent water and it must be dried by the sun or artificially,—slow and expensive operations.

With this essay in our pocket we left the office of the accommodating expert. As we returned down the gallery, the coal in the cases appeared even more attractive than when we went in.

### GARNET FOR JANUARY

Garnet, the January birthstone, is a very common mineral. In the Royal Ontario Museum we found garnets of almost every colour except blue, coming from almost all parts of the world. A red variety, pyrope, is frequently associated with diamonds in South Africa and is often incorrectly called "Cape Ruby." Other varieties are rose red, brown, orange, yellow and green. A transparent green garnet from the Ural Mountains is called "Uralian Emerald" by jewelers. It has no connection with emerald, but it is a brilliant and beautiful stone.

Old superstitions considered garnet a sovereign remedy for hæmorrhage and inflammatory diseases and a precaution against anger and discord. An old legend claims that the only light in Noah's Ark came from a huge red garnet. To-day it is sometimes used to symbolize constancy.

Small spherical crystals of red garnet are common in the rocks of Ontario.

**DO YOU KNOW** that the smallest mammal in the world, the pigmy shrew, is found in Ontario? A specimen on exhibit in the Royal Ontario Museum weighed about one-tenth of an ounce.